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Boston University



**Boston University
School of Medicine**

News & Notes

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Framingham researchers develop new method to predict strokes

Researchers associated with the Framingham Heart Study have developed a new stroke risk profile that can be used to determine the likelihood of an individual's having a stroke within a certain number of years. The new Framingham Stroke Risk Profile, based on data obtained on more than 500 stroke victims over a 34-year period, includes such risk factors as heart disease, atrial fibrillation and hypertension, which were not well understood when the first profile was developed 18 years ago.

The new Framingham Stroke Risk Profile assigns a numerical value to information on age, sex, cigarette smoking, cardiac abnormalities and other measures of health based on each item's relative importance as a risk factor for stroke. "The sum total of these numerical values helps predict a person's chance of having a stroke within a given period of time," said Philip Wolf, M.D., a professor of neurology and epidemiology and the principal investigator of the Framingham Heart Study.

According to Wolf, the profile may help patients understand their personal risk and may improve compliance with preventive measures. "If you tell someone he has a three or four times increased risk of stroke or a 25-percent chance of having a stroke within five years, he'll be much more likely to stop smoking cigarettes and take his high blood pressure medication than if you simply tell him he's at high risk for stroke."

Wolf presented the findings at a news conference on May 1 at the American Academy of Neurology meeting in Miami.

BUSM students, faculty member and alumni inducted into honor society

Several School of Medicine students from the Classes of 1990 and 1991 recently were inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha honor medical society at a ceremony held at the Castle. Inductees from the Class of 1990 include Marisa A. Baorto, David L. Burns, George E. Chaux, Brian S. Goldstein, Doron Israeli, Benjamin E. Kligler, Daniel S. Kohane, Daniel T. Layish, Cynthia Lewis, E. Catherine Miller, Elizabeth A. Pomfret, James J. Pomposelli, Eric L. Roberts, Steven E. Rokito, Andrew H. Segal, Neal H. Shuren and Stanley P. Surette.

Members of the Class of 1991 inducted were David Cohen, Michael Macari, John P. Meehan, Scott D. Pendergast, Abhay Sanan and John M. Timmerman. In addition, David Edwin Burdette, M.D., John Conor O'Keane, M.D., and George Alexander Peterkin III, M.D., all house officers, were inducted into the society.

Louis Vachon, M.D., chairman of the Division of Psychiatry and psychiatrist-in-chief at the University Hospital, was the faculty inductee. Alumni inducted were Elizabeth Clark Dooling '65, president of the Alumni Association, and a past alumni



Barry Manuel, M.D., AOA Faculty Councillor, left, prepares to present the faculty inductee, Louis Vachon, M.D., chairman of the Division of Psychiatry, right, at the AOA induction ceremony. (Boston University Photo Services)

president, P. Anthony Penta '51.

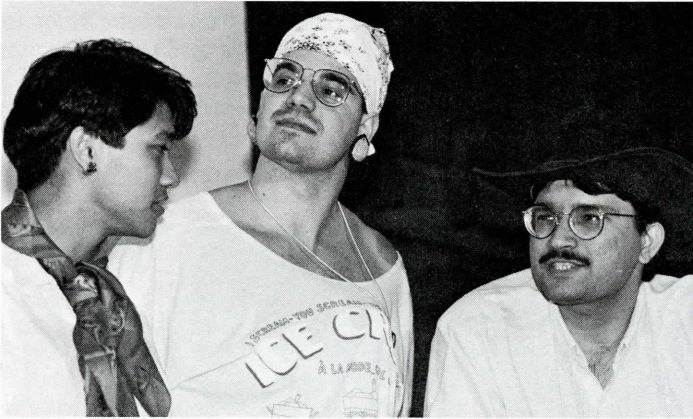
AOA is the only national honor medical society in the world. It was organized for the promotion of scholarship and research in medical schools, the encouragement of a high standard of character and conduct among medical students and graduates, and the recognition of high attainment in medical science, practice and related fields.

Maternal smoking increases chances of childhood asthma, study shows

Mothers who smoke during pregnancy or when their children are very young may not only increase the risk of their children developing asthma but may also increase the chances that their children will develop asthma at an earlier age. A study, published in the April issue of *Pediatrics*, suggests that environmental influences may contribute to or trigger the development of asthma, the number-one chronic illness affecting children, traditionally viewed as a genetic condition.

Researchers from BUSM, Boston City Hospital and the Harvard School of Public Health used data from a nationally representative sample of 4,331 children up to five years of age. The children were gathered as part of the Child Health Supplement of the 1981 National Health Interview Survey. The researchers found that children of women who smoked more than half-a-pack of cigarettes a day were two times more likely to develop asthma, two times more likely to develop asthma during the first year of life, and were four times as likely to use physician-prescribed medications for asthma.

"We were surprised by the magnitude of the association



BUSM first-year students, from left, Mark Cabelin, Joe Raffetto and Amir Jaffer perform in "Jeopardy Goes to Medical School," as part of the School of Medicine's annual "Skit Night." (photo by Rose Marston)

between maternal smoking and childhood asthma," said Michael Weitzman, M.D., an associate professor of pediatrics, who is the principal investigator of the study and director of the Division of General Pediatrics at BCH. "The study suggests that maternal smoking may increase the likelihood that genetically predisposed children will develop the condition, and that they will develop it at an earlier age."

Although previous studies have suggested that passive exposure to cigarette smoke may cause respiratory problems or asthma, this is the first study to use a nationally representative sample and the only study that looked at the age of onset of asthma and maternal smoking.

Sandson and BUSM student decry loss of scholarship fund at legislative meeting

Dean Emeritus John I. Sandson and BUSM student Margaret Duggan recently testified before the House Ways and Means Committee to reinstate the scholarship fund that would benefit 28 School of Medicine students. The committee will decide whether to fund some scholarships or to re-establish the fund.

The scholarship program was created in 1976 to encourage BUSM and Tufts University School of Medicine to continue accepting a substantial number of Massachusetts residents into M.D. programs and to assist those students in financing their educations. Both schools would accept seven Massachusetts residents each year and the state legislature would provide partial scholarships to the 28 students in each school. To "pay back" the scholarships, the students would practice medicine in medically underserved areas of Massachusetts for half of the number of years they received the scholarship.

"At a minimal cost to the state. . . financially needy Massachusetts residents are assisted in their medical education," Sandson said. "In return, the Commonwealth gains the services of well-educated physicians providing medical care where it is most needed."

Sandson said that without the scholarship fund, the shortage of physicians practicing in remote areas of Massachusetts would become worse.

Skit night awards ceremony, festivities held at School of Medicine

The School of Medicine's annual "Skit Night" and awards ceremony, co-sponsored by the Student Committee on Medical School Affairs and the BUSM Alumni Association, recently was held. William McNary, Ph.D., associate dean for student affairs, presented the awards to students and faculty members.

E. Catherine Miller '90 received the Henry J. Baskst Scholarship Award, presented annually to the senior student of BUSM "who has demonstrated the qualities that exemplify the true physician." Dennis Crawford '92 was awarded the Ciba Award for Outstanding Community Service, given by the Ciba Pharmaceutical Company in recognition of the sophomore student who has performed laudable extracurricular activity within the community. The McGraw-Hill Awards, given to the first and second top ranking students who have completed the first curricular year, were presented to John Restivo '92, the top ranking student, and Lewis Marchant '92, the second top ranking student.

The Class of 1954 Faculty and Student Awards were presented to the following: Richard Hoyt, Ph.D., an associate professor of anatomy, received the Thomas Robitscher Faculty Award for excellence in teaching the preclinical sciences; Dick A. J. Brown, M.D., an adjunct assistant clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology, received the Frederick Jackson Faculty Award for excellence in clinical instruction; and Ilene Carlson '92 was presented with the Geoffrey Boughton Student Award, given to the outstanding second-year student in pathology.

Sima Artinian '93 and Joshua Spin '93 received the Dr. Elizabeth K. Moyer Award, recognizing excellence in the course of gross anatomy. Stephen Tringale '90 received the Esther B. and Albert Kahn Scholarship Award, presented to the third-year student who has just completed the third year and who has demonstrated to his/her teachers and peers devotion to the profession and concern and compassion for the patients contacted.

In addition, the first SCOMSA Annual Service Award was presented to Susan Mahair, student affairs officer. This award recognizes the administrator or secretary whom BUSM students found to be most helpful.

Grants awarded and renewed to School of Medicine faculty members

The American Health Assistance Foundation recently awarded a \$20,000 grant to Thomas F. Freddo, O.D., Ph.D., an associate professor of ophthalmology and pathology, and Haiyan Gong, M.D., a Ph.D. candidate in anatomy. The grant was awarded for experimental studies based upon Gong's dissertation work. These studies are directed toward finding the cause of the most common form of glaucoma.

Marlene Oscar Berman, Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry and neurology and director of the Laboratory of Neuropsychology in the Department of Behavioral Neuroscience, recently received notice that the support she requested to renew her grant application, "Affective and Conative Changes in Alcoholism," was approved for an additional five years of funding. The award,



Jerome H. Shapiro, M.D., chairman of the Department of Radiology and president of the American College of Radiology, third from left, participates in a discussion of "The Health Care Crisis: Strategies for Resolution" during the S. A. Kaufman, M.D., Memorial Lecture on April 3. Other participants included, from left, Lester Thurow, dean of the Sloan School of Management, Arnold Relman, M.D., editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, and John Cosgwell, of New England Telephone. (Photo by Gustav Freedman)

totaling over \$500,000, was granted by the Biomedical and Behavioral Sciences Division of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Berman has been receiving grant support from that institute since 1981. Her research is aimed at clarifying the separate and combined effects of alcoholism and aging on emotional and motivational functions.

Weldon accepts positions at BUSM, BCH and UH

Dale Katharine Weldon, M.D., has accepted appointments at BUSM, the University Hospital and Boston City Hospital. Weldon will be an assistant professor of gynecology and obstetrics at BUSM and will provide general gynecology and obstetrics services, including surgery, at the two hospitals. She will also be available to patients at UH's Women's Health Unit.

Weldon received her medical degree from Emory University and is a junior fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She has conducted research on the risk factors associated with ectopic pregnancy and the danger of elevated maternal blood sugar levels to the fetus.

Goldstein separates fact from fiction in new book on impotence

Irwin Goldstein, M.D., an associate professor of urology, dispels damaging myths about impotence in his new book, *The Potent Male; Facts, Fiction and Future*. Such myths include: Impotence is most often a psychological condition; little can be done to treat impotence; and impotence primarily affects the elderly.

In *The Potent Male*, Goldstein explains that impotence—which affects an estimated 10 to 15 million American men—is no longer considered only a psychological condition, but a condi-

tion also related to vascular disease, injury and aging. "The finding that impotence is a circulation or vascular problem helps explain why it is so common and has allowed us to find ways to treat the condition," says Goldstein.

A better understanding of the causes of impotence has led to discoveries in the diagnosis and treatment of the condition. "We can offer hope to most men," says Goldstein. Treatment options include injection therapy, vacuum devices, vascular surgery and penile implants.

Although impotence is common among the elderly, Goldstein says a growing number of young men become impotent as a result of injuries, such as bicycle injuries. "Reconstructive vascular surgery is often successful in these cases," says Goldstein. "We are able to restore many of these young men to normal, natural functioning."

The Potent Male is published by The Body Press, a division of Price Stern and Sloan.

HealthNET hosts addiction series on AIDS Satellite Television Series

BUSM's HealthNET program joined the Physicians' Association for AIDS Care in hosting two national teleconferences on the AIDS Satellite Television Network Series. The two-part series was titled "Alcohol, Drug Abuse and AIDS: Implications for Professional Practice."

During the first part of the series, Maryann Amodeo, M.S.W., Ph.D., of the University's Alcohol and Drug Policy Institute, hosted a discussion on alcohol, cocaine and opiate dependency. Strategies for helping health-care providers understand the process of denial also were discussed. For the second part of the series, Amodeo led a discussion of the various treatment approaches for different controlled substances and women's issues. Model programs for women were examined, such as Women's Inc. and New Day Inc., two local residential programs that allow women to recover without having to relinquish their children.

"The purpose of this joint telecast is to give these important programs the widest possible audiences," said Maryann Dwyer, manager of media programming for BUSM's Area Health Education Center (AHEC).

HealthNET is a series of medical educational programs produced by BUSM's AHEC. The one-hour interview program features experts from various medical fields discussing the latest in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Using audioteleconferencing, HealthNET allows staff from one institution to converse with health professionals at other health centers, as well as with in-studio guests.

Koh participates in international symposium on cancer screening

Howard K. Koh, M.D., F.A.C.P., an associate professor of dermatology, medicine and public health, recently participated in the International Union Against Cancer Symposium on Cancer Screening held in Cambridge, England. During this workshop, 35 cancer experts from around the world reviewed the status of screening at various sites for breast cancer, cervical cancer,

colorectal cancer and melanoma. Koh was one of three doctors from the United States invited to attend the symposium and one of four persons asked to comment on the status of melanoma/skin cancer screening.

Heffernan appointed to Board of Bar Overseers

James J. Heffernan, M.D., an associate professor of medicine, recently was appointed by the Chief Justice and Associated Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court to the Board of Bar Overseers. Heffernan, who is also an associate visiting physician and director of Inpatient Services and General Medicine Consultation Service at Boston City Hospital, will serve on the board for a four-year term.

The Board of Bar Overseers, comprised of nine lawyers and three lay persons, investigates allegations of professional misconduct by attorneys and may discipline lawyers or make recommendations to the Supreme Judicial Court for appropriate disciplinary action.

Finkler appointed to UH and BCH positions

Neil Jay Finkler, M.D., an assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, recently was appointed the new director of gynecologic oncology at the University Hospital and Boston City Hospital. Finkler previously had been a gynecologic oncologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

News & Notes is a publication of the Office of Publication Services. If you have news of interest to the BUSM community, please contact Angela Cochran Sullivan, x8482 (638-8482) or write to her at the Office of Publication Services, DOB-915 (720 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA 02118).

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